



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## SPECIAL CATHOLIC ACTIVITIES IN WAR SERVICE

BY JOHN J. BURKE, C.S.P.

A review of the Catholic war relief work of the country which is to be limited to the space of a magazine article must necessarily be brief. When we touch the subject we immediately include a body of our countrymen numbering over nineteen millions of souls.

Immediately after our entrance into the war, the Catholic Church of the United States through its archbishops sent the following message to the President:

Standing firmly upon our solid Catholic tradition and history, from the very foundation of this nation, we affirm in this hour of stress and trial our most sacred and sincere loyalty and patriotism toward our country, our government, and our flag.

Moved to the very depths of our hearts by the stirring appeal of the President of the United States, and by the action of our national Congress, we accept wholeheartedly and unreservedly the decree of that legislative authority proclaiming this country to be in a state of war.

We have prayed that we might be spared the dire necessity of entering the conflict, but now that war has been declared we bow in obedience to the summons to bear our part in it with fidelity, with courage and with the spirit of sacrifice which as loyal citizens we are bound to manifest for the defense of the most sacred rights, and the welfare of the whole nation.

Acknowledging gladly the gratitude that we have always felt for the protection of our spiritual liberty and the freedom of our Catholic institutions, under the flag, we pledge our devotion and our strength in the maintenance of our country's glorious leadership, in those possessions and principles which have been America's proudest boast.

Inspired neither by hate nor fear, but by the holy sentiments of truest patriotic fervor and zeal, we stand ready, we and all the flock committed to our keeping, to coöperate in every way possible with our President and our national government, to the end that the great and holy cause of liberty may triumph and that our beloved country may emerge from this hour of test stronger and nobler than ever.

Our people, as ever, will rise as one man to serve the nation. Our priests and consecrated women will once again, as in every former trial of our country, win by their bravery, their heroism and their service, new admiration and approval.

We are all true Americans, ready as our age, our ability and our condition permit, to do whatever is in us to do for the preservation, the progress and the triumph of our beloved country.

May God direct and guide our President and our government that out of this trying crisis in our national life may at length come a closer union among all the citizens of America and that an enduring and blessed peace may crown the sacrifices which war inevitably entails.

The vast problems of war relief and civic coöperation with the government appealed to Catholics as well as to all other patriotic citizens. As members of organizations not professedly of any religious character, thousands of Catholics volunteered their services to the government and were accepted. Their names and fields of activity are not included in this article. We have judged that its treatment should be confined to what may be called the corporate activity and coöperation of the Catholic body.

When the American troops were summoned for service on the Mexican border, the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal organization, inaugurated the work of building recreation halls which might also be used for religious services at the various camps. It was found that such civic coöperation promoted in an effective way the physical morale and the religious and spiritual welfare of the men.

As soon as the world war opened for America, the Fosdick Commission took up the question of providing in all the camps recreational centers for the enlisted men. To help in this work the Knights of Columbus offered the services of their entire order, and the organization was named as one of the governmental agencies for the work. Other Catholic societies were willing and anxious to undertake similar work, but from the viewpoint of economy and efficiency this would have been inadvisable. Therefore, in this great work which the Knights so generously undertook, the help, support and coöperation of the entire Catholic body were given to them. At every cantonment in the United States, at every national guard camp and at many of the naval stations, one, two or three halls have been erected by the Knights of Columbus. These have been equipped as recreational centers, manned with secretaries. Everybody, without distinction of creed or color, is made welcome. No distinction of any kind is made. The Knights of Columbus have offered their services, first, to that national cause common to us all as Americans and they have put their entire strength and force in promoting its welfare. They have not limited their activity to the troops at home. They have followed the troops abroad. Club-houses have been erected at the ports of debarkation, recreational centers at the cantonments of the American Expeditionary Forces, and huts behind the fighting lines. Trained secretaries have been sent abroad to conduct this work. The program includes there-

fore a complete coöperation with and seconding of the government in helping to promote the well-being and the morale of the troops both at home and abroad.

America has realized, as no nation ever realized, what civic co-operation, not from afar but at close range, can do for our soldiers. Previous to this time in history they were sent off to the war; now they are sent off—but we go with them. The break with home in its personal and corporate consequences is sad and demoralizing at best; to lessen it, to keep the home spirit with them is of the greatest value to them and the country they serve. We have learned that they are not only our soldiers, but they are our sons and our brothers. We have learned that the war is not theirs alone, but ours also. Consequently, we have followed them to the camp and into the camp, on board the transport, to foreign shores and into the trenches. The program of the government planned for this aid, and it asked the great civic social organizations of the country to coöperate with it by active support. The coöperation thus asked of the Catholic body of the country has been freely and generously given.

At the General Convention of the Catholics of the United States—held for the purpose of considering how we would best help the government win the war—the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved:* That this convention most heartily commends the excellent work which the Knights of Columbus have undertaken in coöperating with the government of the United States in meeting the moral problems which have arisen and will arise out of the war, and it is the opinion of this convention that the Knights of Columbus should be organized as the representative Catholic body for the special work they have undertaken.

This same convention, composed of delegates from almost all the dioceses of the United States, forty national Catholic organizations and the representatives of the Catholic Press Association passed unanimously also this further resolution:

*Resolved:* That it is the unanimous opinion of this convention that the Catholics of the United States should devote their united energies to promote the spiritual and material welfare of the United States troops during the war, wherever they may be, at home or abroad, and should create a national organization to study, coördinate, unify and put in operation all Catholic activities incidental to the war.

At the beginning of the war the number of commissioned chaplains permitted by law was absolutely insufficient for the needs of

the troops. Volunteer chaplains had to be called and their salaries provided by organizations of the faith to which they belonged. Many Catholic volunteer chaplains offered their services and their salaries were paid by the Knights of Columbus. The chaplains in service abroad were all too few as General Pershing's cablegram of last January shows. Such Catholic chaplains were sent abroad in goodly numbers and are being sent today, and the salaries of these men are paid by the Knights of Columbus.

It will be seen that with regard to war relief work with its manifold fields and with many agencies, eager to occupy all or any, the Catholic body faced the same problem as the government faced and as other religious denominations had to face. The government solved it by the appointment of the national Commission on Training Camp Activities of the army and navy, which has really co-ordinated the heads and representatives of social welfare organizations. The Protestant bodies solved it by creating the War Time Commission of the Federal Council of Churches which includes all the Protestant bodies, even the Universalists and the Unitarians. The Jewish body met it by establishing the Jewish Welfare Board. The Catholics have met it by creating the National Catholic War Council.

An organization is more accurately known by its spirit than by its constitution; therefore a word as to the genus or purpose of the National Catholic War Council. It was established not to control, but to direct; not to hinder or curtail, but to coördinate and to promote; not to rule with a master hand but to facilitate by conference and mutually accepted divisions of work. To be complete and efficient, it necessarily had to embrace the entire organization of the Catholic Church. The National Catholic War Council is composed first of the fourteen archbishops, or metropolitans, as they are called in the United States. The extent of territory covered by their sees will be evident from the following enumeration: James Cardinal Gibbons, archbishop of Baltimore; John Cardinal Farley, archbishop of New York; William Cardinal O'Connell, archbishop of Boston; Most Rev. John Ireland, archbishop of St. Paul; Most Rev. Alexander Christie, archbishop of Portland, Oregon; Most Rev. John J. Glennon, archbishop of St. Louis; Most Rev. Sebastian G. Messmer, archbishop of Milwaukee; Most Rev. Henry Moeller, archbishop of Cincinnati; Most Rev.

John B. Pitaval, archbishop of Sante Fe; Most Rev. Dennis J. Dougherty, archbishop of Philadelphia; Most Rev. James J. Keane, archbishop of Dubuque; Most Rev. Edward J. Hanna, archbishop of San Francisco; Most Rev. George W. Mundelein, archbishop of Chicago. With the direct heavy burdens of their own sees, and the great distances to be covered for a common meeting it would be impossible for this body to direct war work. They have, consequently, appointed with power to act an administrative committee of four bishops: Rt. Rev. Peter J. Muldoon of Rockford, Illinois; Rt. Rev. Joseph Schrembs of Toledo, Ohio; Rt. Rev. Patrick J. Hayes of New York and Rt. Rev. William T. Russell of Charleston, South Carolina. It is the office of this body to be a high court of general control and direction. All four of these bishops have the work of their immediate dioceses and necessarily their supervision of such a labor as war relief must be of a general character.

The immediate supervision and direction of war relief work has been left to two sub-committees: the Committee of the Knights of Columbus of which we have spoken and which has for its field all activities within the camps, camp secretaries and overseas work; and the Committee on Special War Activities which, to put it briefly and by way of exclusion, has for its field all that is not included in the work of the Knights of Columbus. The funds of the Knights of Columbus and the expenditures of them are under the control of that organization. And the same may be said of those of the Committee on Special War Activities. It will be seen then that both committees are left to do their independent work, and carry on their own administration. Both are held responsible by a higher authority, the Administrative Committee, and with this committee both meet at intervals for conferences and survey of the entire work through an advisory board, composed of the Administrative Committee, six representatives of the Knights of Columbus and six of the Committee on Special War Activities.

From this outline it will be seen that the entire Catholic Church of the country from the lowest to the highest of its members have put themselves at the service of the government and that within this organization the widest range has been allowed to every agency and every organization, and that the inspiring spirit of it all is to have every one and every society do their best, all working harmoniously under one authority for the welfare of the whole country.

With what thoroughness all fields are covered may be seen from the following survey of the constitution of the Committee on Special War Activities. The committee is composed of Rev. John J. Burke, chairman; Rt. Rev. Monsignor H. T. Drumgoole; Rt. Rev. Monsignor M. J. Splaine; Rt. Rev. Monsignor Edward A. Kelly; Rev. William J. Kerby; John G. Agar and Charles I. Denechaud.

It includes as sub-committees the Committee on Men's Organizations. It deals with all Catholic men's organizations, other than the Knights of Columbus, throughout the country. Before it was established many men's organizations had of course devoted themselves to war work. Now all overlapping, interference, duplication, inability to know just what to do are avoided. This central committee has informed itself first as to what each organization is doing; second, what it is best fitted to do;—and then directs it as to the most needed work in its community. In this way the Catholic clubs throughout the country have been thrown open for the entertainment and reception of soldiers and sailors: the men give of their personal service. They are instructed how to coöperate with the local Fosdick Commission; how to better, if they need to be bettered, the moral conditions of neighboring camps; to provide entertainment under Knights of Columbus auspices in the camps; to join with the Travelers' Aid; to recruit secretaries for camp work at home and abroad; and to coöperate in governmental activities, such as the liberty loan or Red Cross drives or war saving stamps campaigns.

The Red Cross, for example, in its letter of December, 1917, stated that "The Catholic Church has rendered invaluable service to the American Red Cross," and in a later letter, "The Christmas Red Cross membership drive received the enthusiastic support of the Catholic Church throughout the country." Under the Committee of Men's Organizations are registered 6,150 men's societies, all actively engaged in one or more forms of war work.

Another sub-committee is that on Women's Organizations. What was said of the work of the Committee on Men's Organizations may be repeated here. We may add that through this committee the work of building visitors' houses at the camps where they are needed is being carried on efficiently. It has already opened houses at Camp Merritt, New Jersey; Camp Mills, New York; Camp Upton, New York; and Camp Johnston, Florida, and the program

which is being developed and carried out is extensive. This committee has registered 4,200 women's organizations, and is directing their entire forces in the work of war relief whether it be the small local community work at home or the larger national work here or abroad.

A synopsis of the work of one of these societies will serve as evidence of the magnitude of the entire work through the country. The Catholic Women's Service League of Albany was organized June 3, 1917. During the first ten months of its existence it organized twenty-four subordinate units and established headquarters at the expense of \$130,000. This headquarters accommodates classes in First Aid, Home Care for Sick, and Surgical Dressings. The league sent to the Red Cross during that period over 5,000 articles. In the second liberty loan it subscribed \$3,000.00; in thrift savings stamps campaign it has collected \$10,000.00. Together with the Patriotic League it has cared for dependent sailors and soldiers. Its aid is extended to people of all denominations, and its activities reach into many more channels than those we have mentioned. The Committee on Women's Organizations undertakes also the work of relief and care of Belgian and French children; and such special work as coöperating with the Association of American Colleges in the education in this country of French girls.

Another sub-committee is that of Historical Records. This committee purposes to preserve a record of the names of all Catholics in the service of the United States and of all Catholic activity with regard to the war and its subsequent problems. Its field is immense. It will also publish shortly a special bulletin of general interest and war information. It keeps in close touch with governmental agencies of history and record. The Sub-committee on Publicity is a bureau of information, useful and necessary not only for the Catholic body, but for all others—individual or organized bodies, since the work of one is of interest and closely allied with the work of all.

From the very beginning of the war the Catholic Church found it imperative to supply their many chaplains with all that was necessary to conduct divine service. This meant, in the first place, an altar, altar equipment, vestments, chalice, etc. All these go to make up what is called a chaplain's "kit." Moreover, for the welfare of the troops, it was necessary to supply prayer books, religious



articles, the New Testaments,—literature that would be helpful and inspiring. To cover this special field the Chaplains' Aid Association was organized, as early as April, 1917. This association with its many chapters throughout the country is under the Subcommittee on Chaplains' Aid and Literature, of the Committee on Special War Activities. We need not review its work here. Sufficient to say it has distributed 400,000 prayer books, printed and is distributing 570,000 copies of the New Testament and in general provides for these special needs of our Catholic—and frequently non-Catholic—soldiers and sailors, both at home and abroad.

Under the Special Activities Committee is the Committee on Finance. Its title defines its office. There is also the Committee on Reconstruction which has already taken up the various problems that even now face us and that will increase when the war ends.

It may be added that all these committees are acting constantly in concert with Protestant and Jewish bodies. The chairman of the Committee on Special War Activities is also the chairman of the Committee of Six, an advisory commission to the Commission on Training Camp Activities and to the War Department. The membership of this committee is as follows: Rt. Rev. James DeWolf Perry, chairman of the Executive Committee of the War Commission of the Episcopal Church; Mr. Robert E. Speer, chairman of War Time Commission of the Federal Council of Churches; Dr. William Adams Brown, secretary of the War Time Commission of the Federal Council of Churches; Mr. John R. Mott, international secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association; Colonel Harry Cutler, chairman of the Jewish Welfare Board in the United States Army and Navy, and Rev. John J. Burke, C.S.P., chairman of Committee on Special War Activities of the National Catholic War Council.

The National Catholic War Council is constantly securing and directing the coöperation of the entire Catholic body with all governmental activity. Its national headquarters are at 932 14th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Its work, we trust, is evidence of how the Catholic Church in America works as one, individually and corporately, for the support of the government, the welfare of our troops and the victorious triumph of our arms.